

His Touch

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[0:00] Jesus touches people.

The Lord Jesus reached out and he touched people! We see that, for example, Matthew 9, 27, it says, And when Jesus departed, then his two blind men followed him, crying and saying, Son of David, have mercy!

On us. And when he was come into the house, the blind came to him. And Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this?

They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then he touched, he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened, and Jesus straightly charged them, saying, And seen that no man knoweth.

He touched the blind. In Matthew 14, 35-36. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased, and besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment.

[1:23] And as many as touched were made perfectly whole. So he touched the blind, they were healed. The diseased touched him, and were made whole. The diseased.

And thirdly, the children touched him, or he touched them. Mark 10, 13. And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer, or allow, the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. Jesus touches people. He touched the blind. He touched the diseased. He touched the young children. Jesus reaches out in care for people of all ages.

[2:28] And he brings life and hope. He holds us safe and embraces us. Matthew 8 tells us of a leper.

Matthew 8, verse 1 to 3. When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Leprosy. Leprosy. We don't hear much about it, but it's still around about the world today. Leprosy. The terror. The horror. Of leprosy.

It struck fear into the heart. It's an awful disease. It's like you could imagine, as would commonly be thought of today, of awful diseases today, of cancer, of AIDS.

[3:40] Leprosy was dreaded. It was a dreadful thing. An awful thing. When a person found out that they had leprosy, their life was changed. Terribly changed.

Forever changed. It was hopeless for them. There was no treatment, no cure. Nothing that could ease the discomfort of leprosy.

And friends, tonight, leprosy is symbolic of sin. We see the Word of God through the Old Testament pages speaks of leprosy, and it's a picture, a type, a symbol of sin, leprosy, a symbol of sin.

Leprosy. Inherited. Incurable. Contagious. Rotting. Away the flesh.

Gradually. Leprosy, like sin. It defiles. It deadens. Leprosy. The nerve endings of a man or woman with leprosy would be deadened such that they would lose feeling.

[4:46] It can bring blindness. It can affect the sufferer's loved ones. The whole community. It makes no distinction of race, of gender, of colour, of creed, of age, of riches, of social standing.

Leprosy. If you're struck with it, it's fatal. It's death. Just like sin, isn't it? Fatal. It brings death. As man's sin in Adam brought death to the world. A leper had to tear his garments as a sign of deep grief.

As if lamenting his own virtual death. He had to wall on passers-by to keep away from him. He would call out, unclean!

Unclean! People had to keep a wide berth of a person with leprosy. He could not speak to anyone or receive or return a salutation.

[5:53] Since in the East, this involves an embrace. No one would come near him. What would it be like? What would it be like to live like this?

To live like that? You'd feel worthless, depressed, hopeless. Such a lonely life.

And there was no cure, no hope. Lepers were rejected. They were shunned by their own families. Quarantined, separated. It was the law of the day.

Leprosy causes a person to be separated from those that he loves. Sin, likewise, causes us to be separated, torn away from God, separated with a big barrier dividing us and God.

Sin separates us from God. No one would go near a leper. Yet Jesus is a friend of sinners. He is a friend of sinners.

[7:01] He did not turn away from this man. Lepers were usually beggars. Depending upon others for their sustenance, there was no way they could get a job like this.

If they had a family that had enough food to share, the family would take food to them if they were fortunate. Jewish law made it very hard for lepers.

If a leper was to even stick his head inside your house, the house would be pronounced unclean. Nobody wanted that. So you can imagine there was no way they could pay their family a visit.

It became illegal to even greet a leper. They had to be, I'm told, at least 300 feet away from a person if they were upwind and 12 feet away if downwind.

There were certain rules about distances, so imagine that, 300 feet away from those around about you. They were treated as a dead man walking, as dead men walking.

[8:17] Like leprosy, sin is not just skin deep. It goes to the very core of our being. It's part and parcel of who we are as human beings.

The sin nature, the sin of Adam is part of the very core of our lives. It fills us to the very bone, eats us down.

It eats down to the very marrow. It eats down to the very bone, to the very core of our being. Sin is just like leprosy in many ways.

Leprosy. It started innocently enough, perhaps you just noticed a little pimple, a little mark. Before long, it spreads over the whole body.

you wouldn't want to have anything to do with it. It eats the skin, it kills the nerves. To come into contact with a leper surely meant death.

[9:21] No wonder everyone avoided them. Everyone but Jesus, that is. Like leprosy, sin defiles us.

Just as leprosy disfigures sin, causes pain and loss in our lives. No wonder the Lord compares it in effect to leprosy, what sin does to a man, to a woman.

It's an ugly thing. Leprosy caused a person to be a dead man walking. Sin causes spiritual death, the wages of sin is death.

Isaiah 59 2, but your iniquities or your sins have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear.

Sin is a barrier just like leprosy. leprosy corrupts, it degrades,!

[10:34] It deforms, it defiles, it disfigures, as does sin. God sees our sin as just as ugly and vile God.

that defiles the heart of a man, so he cannot enter into the presence of the holy God, the pure and holy God. What a misery for this leper, what a misery for a man, a woman with leprosy.

We read here, it says, the leper came and worshipped him. It says, the leper came to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The leper came to the Lord Jesus, he came and he worshipped him. And what does Jesus do? Jesus tenderly touches him, Jesus tenderly touches the man.

What acceptance, what mercy. The Lord Jesus responds to worship, he responds to faith, he responds to repentance, there is cleansing for the leprosy of sin.

[11:43] The Lord Jesus reaches down and he touches us, he takes our sin in his absolute grace and goodness, he touches the foul and filthy flesh, he brings cleansing.

Just as leprosy is a type of sin, this story shows us how God deals with sin in our life. Just as this leper came to Jesus, a sinner can come to the Lord Jesus.

A sinner can approach Jesus just like this man did. You need to be aware there is a problem. You need to be aware there is a problem.

The man knew that he had leprosy. We know that we have sinned. It's a good starting point. It's the first starting point to becoming a Christian. To know I have sinned.

There's nothing I can do. I am a sinner. He knew his condition was hopeless. Likewise sinner, know your condition is hopeless.

[12:50] You are without hope, without Christ. There is no hope except him. He knew he could do nothing for himself.

Sinner, know that you can do nothing for yourself. Nothing. Nothing can cleanse the sin slate of your life.

Nothing can make it clean. His life and happiness were ruined forever. Like that too, sinner, you're ruined forever without Jesus as your only hope.

Lost sinners need to see the awfulness, the sinfulness, the exceeding sinfulness, the awfulness of their sinful condition. There's no human cure for this disease of sin.

There's no one you can turn to. There's nothing you can turn to. There's only Christ you can turn to.

As our lives, sadly, we see are ruined by sin, the Lord Jesus is our only hope.

[14:00] And we need to come as this man came to humble ourselves before the Lord Jesus. What did he do? He fell on his face before Jesus. The Lord Jesus did not come to the self-sufficient, to those who think they don't need him.

It is those who know they need him that come unto him. And we need to come and humble ourselves, as this man did, to agree with God we have sinned, to come to him for the only help we can find for that need.

You need to ask for forgiveness. The Lord Jesus was approached by this man and he asked for healing. He called out in faith, like that too, we must.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus freely forgives those who ask him. And the Lord Jesus sees us like a leper. He sees you like a leper.

You that are outside of Christ, he sees you like a leper, deformed, defiled, disfigured. And what does he do? He has compassion upon you.

[15:12] Thank God. Thank God. That's how he responds, with compassion. And he touches us. He touches us.

The Lord Jesus touches your sin infected life. Thank God for grace like that. Thank God for a gracious saviour such as that.

Can you imagine what it was like for this leper to be touched by Jesus? To be touched by the Lord? How long had it been since anybody had touched him?

Since someone had touched him? Could have been a lifetime pretty much. This leper may have been married and could no longer hug or kiss his spouse or child.

For years this leper had not known one touch. People avoided lepers but Jesus touched him. Amen.

[16:16] Jesus touched him. People looking on from the crowd would have been shocked that Jesus would have dared to defile himself by touching this leper.

Shock horror. Jesus became sin for us. That's amazing. That's amazing.

Amazing grace. Jesus became sin for you, for me, our sin, your sin, my sin, was in his body on the tree.

Jesus still touches lives today. And people can still touch him by faith. Look at Matthew chapter 9. Matthew 9 verse 20. The Lord Jesus touches the leper. The sinful can touch him.

[17:22] In Matthew 9 verse 20 we read of a woman. It says verse 20 of Matthew 9 And behold a woman which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years came behind him and touched the hem of his garment.

For she said within herself if I may but touch his garment I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about and when he saw he said daughter be of good comfort thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that very hour. she reached out she believed she pressed through the crowd she pushed through the throng to be with Jesus to touch the hem of his garment. Is there a barrier for you to trust him? Nothing would hold her back draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

You can touch Jesus by faith today. And another scripture Luke 7 37 Luke 7 There's so many we could give of such examples but Luke 7 37 to 39 Luke 7 37 to 39 Even the most unworthy and sinful if not especially the most unworthy and sinful it's really amazing isn't it that they are the ones he would come to that they are the ones who would come to him Luke 7 37 to 39 and the occasion is of where the Lord is in the Pharisee's house and they're eating and verse 37 of Luke 7 and behold a woman in the city which was a sinner when she knew that house brought an alabaster box of ointment and stood at his feet behind him weeping and began to wash his feet with tears and did wipe them with the hairs of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment now when the

[19:39] Pharisee which had bidden him saw it he spoke with himself saying this man if he were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touch of him for she is a sinner yes she was she came to Jesus she touched him she wept wiped his feet with her tears with her hair and anointed his feet with ointment the Lord Jesus touches sinners still and the Lord Jesus lets sinners touch him still that's good news isn't it that's great news it's great news if you're outside of Christ this is the great encouragement we can have that no matter what no matter what if we can but come to him if we can but come to him by faith he will receive our love and worship he will take our tears and guilt away he does not reject the vile and sinful rather he welcomes them this man receiving sinners they said he does not reject but he receives and still he touches lives and transforms people today his arms are open to you today to reach out and touch him today by faith friends we see the

Lord Jesus touched the leper the Lord Jesus touched the leper he reached out his hand and he touched the leper we see secondly how the woman reached out and touched him she reached out her arm her hand her fingers and touched the hand of the Lord Jesus garments Jesus touches people and we can touch him and friends what about touching others for the saviour what about reaching out to others as we know in effect we are his hand extended he has no other feet but our feet he has no other hands but our hands no other mouth but our mouth as some of us written along that line so we are Christ to our world we ought to be those that are taking the message that are extending our hands to others that are reaching out to those who need reaching with the message of salvation and friends

I just want to close by encouraging you reach out and touch him reach out and touch him like a woman the Lord Jesus reached out and touched the leper the woman reached out and touched the Lord Jesus so it's twofold isn't it he reaches out and touches us we can reach out and touch him and thirdly how can we as his people reach out and touch others for him let's pray!